

Supply

The question is: Do we want to live on our knees or on our own two feet? The accommodationists would say that we will suffer a decline in our standard of living if we do not buckle under.

The resisters might say that our standard of living is probably bound to fall in any event, either as globalization and continentalization take place, or as American retaliation for abrogation takes place. Or indeed, which would be a positive thing, if we came to distribute the world's resources more equally in a way that provided for frugal comfort for all the people of the world.

A decline in the standard of living can either happen together in a way that preserves that which is truly valuable or randomly as some are devastated by the marketplace and others, a minority, prosper.

The Liberal Party, whose leader in 1988 fought the fight of his life and now comes to the House of Commons once in a blue moon even though he is still an MP, does not have the visceral hatred of the free trade agreement that will be needed to abrogate it. It and its corporate backers, and they are many, legion indeed, will try to sell the renegotiation angle. It might even have to pretend that it wants to abrogate it again if that becomes politically necessary.

However, the Liberal Party's early opposition to participating in the NAFTA talks which disappeared so quickly should be a sign to those who want to see reality. I say those who want to see reality, and I say that for a reason, because not all want to see reality.

There is a class of people in this country that wants to abrogate the FTA but wants to still be able to vote Liberal. This will be a fatal illusion, fatal for Canada and fatal perhaps for the NDP, though that really will not matter any more because if the FTA continues the kind of Canada that the NDP has worked for and envisions yet will be impossible in any event.

The Liberals will not do anything significant to change, let alone abrogate the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement. There are those who sometimes from the right of the NDP in the Liberal universe agree with the NDP or know in their hearts that we are the only choice on these kinds of issues but who sociologically cannot bring themselves to vote, or even worse openly support or be NDP.

It is like moving to the other side of the tracks. Self-esteem does not permit it. It is like joining the outs. It is much nicer to be progressive and still be part of the ins. There are others to the left of the NDP who are very self-righteous when it comes to judging the NDP on many issues but they have no compunction about joining with Liberals and various coalitions sometimes at election time.

Those two groups are united by their common sense of being too good or too sophisticated for the New Democratic Party. I say here today that these tendencies will have to be swallowed and eliminated if Canada is to survive. Otherwise it will be said of such people when true histories are written that what they were too good for was not the NDP, but the Canada they and a majority of other Canadians loved and wanted to defend.

Maude Barlow's book *Parcel of Rogues*, the book she did with Bruce Campbell *Take Back the Nation*, Linda McQuaig's book *The Quick and the Dead*, Mel Hurtig's book *Betrayal of Canada*, all side-step this crucial question of who can actually be trusted to get rid of the deal.

More or less, none of the books deal with the question of who can be trusted and more or less all of them, if they acknowledge the NDP at all—and some of them do not even acknowledge our existence—avoid judgments on who will actually do the deed of abrogating the agreement. It is the question that dare not speak its name, but unless it is asked and debated, the Canadian people will be served very poorly.

Parcel of Rogues is a title that takes its name from a poem by Robert Burns called *The Union* in which he refers to the fact that Scotland, which never submitted to English steel, was bought and sold for English gold. I used this poem in the House to make such a point on Burn's Day on January 25, 1988, long before the book was even conceived.

An even more instructive analogy in the same vein would be the highland clearances. What made the highland clearances even more despicable and disgusting was the fact that it was perpetrated by the people's own traditional leaders who sold them out to southern interests.

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Some historians have explained the relative acceptance of the Scots of such atrocities compared to the Irish by noting that they made the mistake of deferring to